

Not only should the FCC refuse to mandate copy protection in broadcast data...the FCC should make it very clear that access to the "public access" portion of the spectrum requires that the signal be completely unfettered, to allow for such activities as timeshifting and archival videotaping on generic consumer equipment. (In the past, this has been called "fair use".)

Without such assurances, it is not unreasonable to foresee a situation in which specific Digital Rights Management (DRM)-enabled devices are required not only to record a program, but to play it back. Your VCR won't be allowed to play a program your mother recorded.

This is a dangerous precedent to set. If a company wishes to broadcast a digital signal (the operative word being "broadcast", it should be understood that the public can access that signal, for their personal use, as they see fit. It must be understood that there is no legal or practical difference between that digital signal and an analog signal...and, therefore, that no distinction will be allowed.